

**TOWN OF ELSMERE
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
March 29, 2012
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Deborah A. Norkavage called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

MAYOR	DEBORAH A. NORKAVAGE	PRESENT
1 ST DISTRICT	JOHN JAREMCHUK, JR.	PRESENT
2 ND DISTRICT	STEVEN BURG	PRESENT
3 RD DISTRICT	ROBERT KACPERSKI	PRESENT
4 TH DISTRICT	CHARLES MCKEWEN	PRESENT
5 TH DISTRICT	JOANN I. PERSONTI	PRESENT
6 TH DISTRICT	RICHARD MOORE	PRESENT
Town Solicitor, Edward McNally – Absent		
Town Manager, John Giles – Present		
Chief of Police, Laura Giles – Present		

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Consideration of a staffing situation within the Department of Public Safety

Chief Laura Giles discussed that there were two current officers who were in the process of being hired by New Castle County. One of those two officers have passed all of their tests and must now pass their physical and psychological tests and has been confirmed by New Castle County that they intend to offer this officer a letter of hire once those are completed. This would mean that the officer would be leaving on May 1, 2012. The State of Delaware will be having a Police Academy that will begin on April 23, 2012, this Academy would cost \$1100.00 per officer and she is fully confident that this will be fundable through the current SALLE Grant. She indicated that she has the funding available in her current budget to allow for the hiring of two officers to be sent to the Academy. This would be to replace the officer that will be leaving on May 1, 2012 and to increase the strength of the force to 12 officers for the next fiscal year. The purpose of requesting this prior to the budget hearing is because the officers must be enrolled in the Academy by April 1, 2012. Therefore, this request would mean to increase the current force to 13 officers until the officer who is leaving had left, then they would remain at 12 officers.

Councilwoman Personti asked if the Chief had considered the salary that would be required for the Summer Bicycle Patrol.

Chief Laura Giles responded that the funding for those was already available through another grant.

Councilman Burg confirmed that the force would increase to 13 until the resignation of one officer and would remain at the increased force of 12.

Chief Laura Giles confirmed that he was correct.

Mayor Norkavage asked if this would require additional vehicles.

Chief Laura Giles stated that no additional vehicles would be required. She also stated that this would result in the savings of money due to the salary and pension differences of the current PFC and a Recruit as well as the decrease of pension contribution of 14% for the state and the new 7.5% for the defined contribution plan that the new officers will go into.

Councilman Jaremchuk stated that the authorized strength of the force in 1977 was 12, then in the 1990's the force decreased to 11 because of necessary salary increases. Therefore, it is traditional for the department to have 12 members.

Councilman Kacperski asked that the earliest the officers would be on the street is September.

Chief Laura Giles stated that they would graduate the academy in September but would not patrol alone until January. They would be assigned with a supervisor through the end of December.

Councilwoman Personti asked that if the Council authorized the 12 member would the Chief be willing to reconsider the position again once the budget numbers have been seen, therefore, should an additional officer leave she would speak with Council again before replacing the officer.

Chief Laura Giles stated that she would definitely be willing to do that.

Councilwoman Personti asked if she had an idea of who the recruits would be.

Chief Laura Giles stated that only two applicants made it through the interviews out of six. She also announced that one of the two applicants does happen to be her step son, however she was not aware of the status of his application until all applicants had been reviewed and the finalists were forwarded to her.

Councilwoman Personti asked who the second applicant was.

Chief Laura Giles announced that the other finalist was Steven West who was previously a summer patrol officer.

Councilwoman Personti stated that she is happy that both applicants are familiar with the Town.

ACTION: A motion was made by Councilman Burg made a motion that in accordance with section 702.9 of the Charter of the Town of Elsmere to increase the staffing level of the Department of Public Safety effective immediately to the accordance of increasing 11 members to 13 and authorizing the Chief to immediate hire 2 officers, and further that once the department reaches its newly authorized staffing level of 13 through attrition the next officer to leave the employment of the Department will not be replaced and the authorized staffing level of the officers shall remain at 12 and shall not be increased or decreased except with the compliance of Section 702.9 of the Charter of the Town of Elsmere. The motion was seconded by Councilman Jaremchuk.

AMMENDMENT: Councilwoman Personti requested an amendment to the motion that through the attrition if the number of officers drops to 11 that the Chief return to Council to decide if a 12th officer is approved.

Councilman Jaremchuk stated that it is possible to do that at a later time with a motion should the situation occur.

Councilwoman Personti stated that she is aware but would like it to be part of the current motion.

Mayor Norkavage seconded Councilwoman Personti's Ammendment.

AMMENDMENT VOTE: 3-4 Motion Defeated

1st District – No, 2nd District – No, 3rd District – No, 4th District – No,
5th District – Yes, 6th District – Yes, Mayor – Yes

VOTE: 6-1 Motion Carried

1st District – Yes, 2nd District – Yes, 3rd District – Yes, 4th District – Yes,
5th District – No, 6th District – Yes, Mayor – Yes

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

None

ITEMS SUBMITTED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

District 1 – None

District 2 – Councilman Burg stated that he is happy that the Council has increased the Town's Public Safety, however, he would like to remind the members of Council that there are two sides to the Town and that he would like to repeat his previous comments that he will not support any freezes or cuts to the Town employees. He stated that the Council needs to be sure to treat the administrative side the same as the treat the police side.

District 3 – None

District 4 – None

District 5 – None

District 6 – None

Mayor – None

Town Manager John Giles asked that the record show that this was a Special Meeting called by the Mayor and Council in accordance with the Charter and that at least two days written notice was supplied to all of the Council members and asked if all Council members received said notice.

All members confirmed that they had.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: A motion was made by Councilwoman Personti to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mayor Norkavage.

VOTE: 7-0 All-in-Favor Motion carried

These minutes summarize agenda and other issues discussed at this Council Meeting. Votes are recorded accurately. The audio tape(s) of this meeting will be available at Town Hall for a period of two years from the date these minutes are approved. The audio tapes may be reviewed at Town Hall by appointment and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

DEBORAH A. NORKAVAGE
MAYOR

JOANN I. PERSONTI
SECRETARY